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## BOOK NOTICES.

*Dr. G. Schweinfurth. De l'Origine des Égyptiens et sur quelques-uns de leurs Usages, remontant à l'Age de la Pierre. (Extrait du Bulletin de la Société Khédiviale de Géographie IV<sup>e</sup> Série, N<sup>o</sup>. 12.) Le Caire, Imprimerie Nationale, 1897.*

Dr. Schweinfurth sees the beginning of a new era in science in the recent discoveries made by De Morgan, Flinders Petrie and Amélineau. The Egyptologist, he says, beholds with astonishment a part of his domain escaping from his control, and finds that he must give way to the naturalist. It is no longer possible to deny the stone age in Egypt, but the origin of the Egyptians remains an insoluble problem. Some general reflections present themselves to Dr. Schweinfurth. The movement of civilisation in the antique Orient takes the form of a triangle, the points of which are Arabia Felix, Egypt and Babylonia. The question of the Hamitic people, or Cushites, belongs to Arabia, and the first current brings them to Egypt by way of Nubia to the Nile. At this time the camel was not yet domesticated, perhaps it did not exist, in Arabia Felix, but it was found in Nubia, together with the ass, the *boat*, if the camel is the *shîb*, of the desert.

Before reaching the Nile, the emigrants from Asia made a long sojourn in the rocky valleys of Etbaï, and here, perhaps, they passed their apprenticeship in learning to fashion their stone implements.

In prehistoric times, there was probably no approach to Egypt by land, from the north-east. Lower Egypt then formed an inaccessible marsh, and in the days of Herodotus the tradition still subsisted that the provinces of the Delta were of recent formation.

The descendants of the first conquerors of Egypt are the Hamitic Bega, or Beda, of the present day. Among these, the Ababdeh are the degenerate representatives of the race, having retrograded perhaps for thousands of years.

It was not less than 5,000 years before our era that the first Babylonians arrived on the banks of the Nile, and set the neolithic man to work in the copper mines of Sinai and the eastern chain.

Dr. Schweinfurth first became acquainted with the Ababdeh in 1864, and he was struck with the simplicity of their stone plates and cooking utensils, made of a sort of steatite or talcose schist, which resists the fire. The Ababdeh also make little pipes, in a

single piece. Some of their pots are made of a metamorphic serpentine, much harder than steatite, and the sight of these objects seemed like a return to the stone age. No such utensils have been found by Dr. Schweinfurth in any other part of Africa, and they are absolutely wanting in the museums. It is not strange, therefore, that Mr. Flinders Petrie imagined that he had found in the environs of Tukh the tombs of a new immigrant race, while there is every reason to believe, with De Morgan, that the race discovered by the English savant was in reality the oldest Egyptian race.

*Nel Paese delle Amazzoni.* Pel Prof. Dott. Vincenzo Grossi, libero docente di Etnologia Americana nella R. Università di Genova. Roma, Tip. dell' Unione Cooperativa Editrice, Via di Porta Salaria, 23-A. 1897. 8vo.

In this little book of 120 pages Dr. Grossi presents a summary of the physical and political geography of the Brazilian States of Pará and Amazonas and their products, with special reference to Italian commerce and navigation. Such a work is, of necessity, a compilation; made, however, in this instance by a writer who is intimately acquainted with the vast literature of his subject, and able to correct his reading by his own observations. With all its statistics, the work may be read with pleasure for its style and finish.

It has several pretty illustrations and an excellent map of the Amazon basin.

*Dr. Alfonso Lomonaco. Da Palermo a New-Orleans.* Roma, E. Loescher & Co. (Bretschneider e Regenberg) Librai di S. M. la Regina d'Italia. 8vo. (1897.)

Originally published in the *Rassegna Nazionale*, of Florence, these Notes of Travel make an interesting volume worthy of preservation. Dr. Lomonaco, as physician of the steamer *Montebello*, had rare opportunities for studying the types of the southern Italian emigrants on board the vessel. His descriptions of character and of scenery are not less life-like, though briefer, than those of De Amicis in his book, *Sull' Oceano*, on a similar subject.

The first impression on landing in New Orleans was anything but pleasing. The stranger made his way at the risk of his life, through ill-paved and crowded streets, each more muddy than the last; but once in the heart of the city, he found many things to admire. The animation of the crowds continually interested him.